

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, IT, NATO

SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER ANDREOTTI'S VISIT TO GREECE

REF: ROME 12310

1. AS INDICATED REFTEL DEFMIN ANDREOTTI GAVE ME HIS VIEWS ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF GREECE WITH NATO ON HIS RETURN FROM A BREIF VISIT TO ATHENS LAST WEEK. ANDREOTTI IS CONVINCED THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, IN FACT, INTENDS TO ABANDON MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN NATO ALTHOUGH IT TAKES THIS STEP WITH SADNESS BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT IS COMPOSED OF MEN SINCERELY CONVINCED OF THE NEED FOR WESTERN SOLIDARITY.

2. ANDREOTTI REPORTS THAT GREEK PUBLIC OPINION IS ESPECIALLY UPSET BY THE SECOND TURKISH ATTACK IN CYPRUS AFTER A QUOTE CEASE-FIRE UNQUOTE HAD BEEN AGREED AND WHEN THE GREEKS HAD NOT REFUSED TURKISH PROPOSALS FOR A SOLUTION BUT HAD ASKED ONLY FOR A FEW HOURS TO EXAMINE THEM. SINCE IT IS FELT THAT THE TURKS WOULD NOT HAVE DARED TO MOVE IN THE FACE OF A PRECISE OPPOSITION BY THE AMERICANS AND OF THE ALLIANCE, THERE IS A STRONG POPULAR RE-ACTION AGAINST NATO AND AGAINST THE UNITED STATES.

3. ANDREOTTI ALSO NOTED THAT THE GREEKS COMPLAINED THAT AMBASSADOR DAVIES HAD VISITED SAMPSON IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE OVER-THROW OF MAKARIOS. THIS ACTION IS TAKEN BY THE GREEKS TO SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A FAVORABLE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE, NOTWITHSTANDING THAT SAMPSON WAS TOTALLY DISCREDITED.

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4. IF TURKEY CARRIES OUT CONCRETE GESTURES TOWARD AT LEAST A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL, ANDREOTTI BELIEVES IT POSSIBLE THAT THE TWO PARTIES WILL FIND A WORKABLE AND HONORABLE SOLUTION TO THE CYPRIOT QUESTION AND ALSO OTHER POINTS IN DISPUTE. IN THIS CASE ANDREOTTI BELIEVES GREEK GOVERNMENT COULD RETURN TO FULL COLLABORATION IN NATO. BUT IT IS NECESSARY TO MOVE BEFORE THE SITUATION BECOMES RIGID AND PROPOSALS TO MOVE THE DISPUTE INTO THE UN OR OTHER FORA CAN GAIN CURRENCY. VOLPE

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